

Poisoning

The facts

- 125 children die from poisoning every day.
- The rate of fatal poisoning is highest for children under one year, with a slight peak around 15 years as older teenagers experiment with drugs and alcohol.
- Fatal poisoning rates in low-income and middle-income countries are four times higher than in high-income countries.

What can be done?

- ✓ Remove any toxic products from your home that do not have to be stored there, such as pesticides and bottled kerosene.
- ✓ Store all drugs and other poisons (including household cleaning products) behind lock and key or out of the reach of children.
- ✓ Purchase medication in child-resistant packaging.
- ✓ Find out if there is a poison control centre in your area, which you can call to receive information in case of a suspected poisoning, and keep the telephone number by your phone.

MYTH: The bottle has a "childproof" cap!

Many containers have child-resistant caps. Caps are designed and tested to prevent 80% of children from opening them. That means 20% will still work out how to open the container. Your child might be one of these. Child-resistant caps should be considered, at best, to be a time delay.



What else can we do?

- Attend a first aid course that includes a module on how to resuscitate a child.
- Keep a first aid kit in your home and car (this is the law in some countries).
- Read *Have Fun, Be Safe!*, the child-friendly companion to the *World report on child injury prevention*, with children, and talk to them about how they can keep safe.
- Teach all children to stop, look and listen before crossing a road, and to think about the safest place to cross.

MYTH: If parents supervised their children properly these injuries wouldn't happen

No parent can supervise their child 24 hours a day. There will always be distractions and lapses in concentration and supervision. Putting in place some of the suggestions in this factsheet will reduce the chances of your child sustaining an injury.



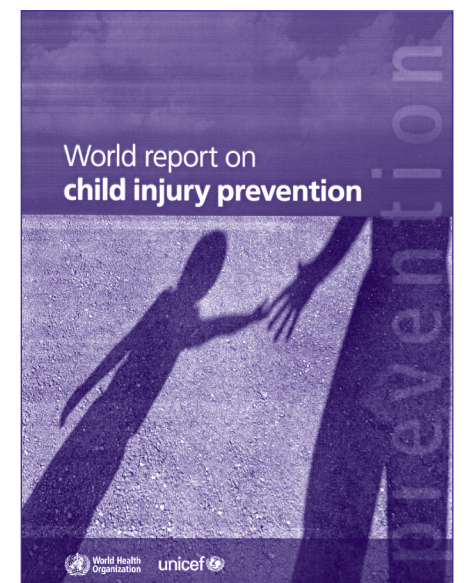
World report on child injury prevention

What you can do to keep kids safe from injury

Every day around the world the lives of more than 2000 families are torn apart by the loss of a child to an unintentional injury. Once a child is 9 years old, road traffic injuries, drowning, burns, falls and poisoning together pose the biggest threat to his or her survival.

The *World report on child injury prevention* brings together what we know about these injuries, making recommendations on how to prevent them and realize children's right to a safe environment. Implementing proven injury prevention interventions could save more than 1000 young lives a day. Many of these steps must be taken by governments, through legislation, law enforcement and strengthening of health care systems.

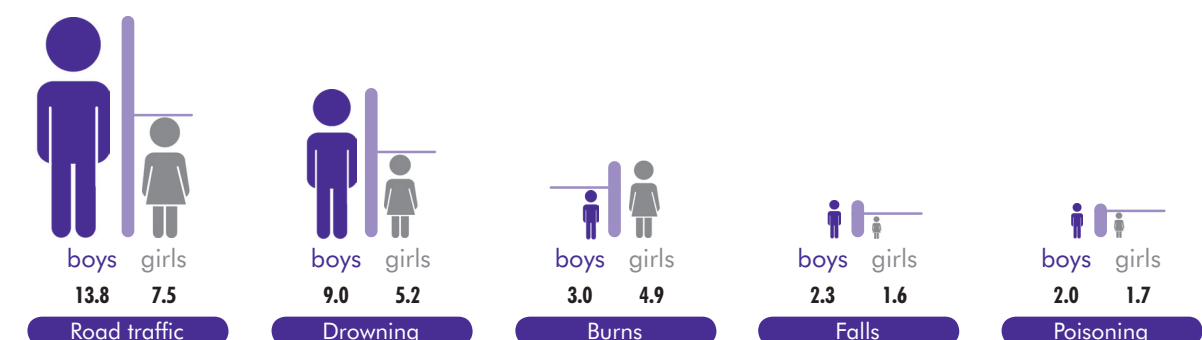
However, there are steps that we, as parents, grandparents, teachers or members of a community, can take to protect children. This fact sheet outlines some of the simple things we can do to keep kids safe from injury.



The facts about child injuries

- Approximately 830 000 children under 18 years die every year as a result of an unintentional injury.
- Unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death for children over 9 years.
- Road traffic injuries and drowning account for nearly half of all unintentional child injuries.
- Tens of millions of children require hospital care every year for non-fatal injuries.
- Road traffic injuries and falls are the main causes of injury-related child disabilities.
- 95% of child injuries occur in low-income and middle-income countries.
- Child injuries remain a problem in high-income countries, accounting for 40% of all child deaths.
- Many high-income countries have been able to reduce their child injury deaths by up to 50% over the past three decades by implementing multisectoral, multipronged approaches to child injury prevention.

Rate of unintentional injuries per 100 000 children, World, 2004



“Implementing proven child injury prevention interventions could save more than a thousand children's lives a day.”

Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General, WHO and
Mrs Ann Veneman, Executive Director, UNICEF



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Road traffic injuries

The facts

- 720 children die from road traffic crashes every day.
- Globally, road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death in 10–19 year olds.
- In low-income and middle-income countries most traffic deaths are among pedestrians, passengers in vehicles or on two-wheelers.
- In high-income countries, most deaths are among novice drivers.
- The most common non-fatal injuries sustained by children are head injuries and fractured limbs.
- Road traffic injuries are also a leading cause of disability for children.

MYTH: I can hold onto my child in the event of a crash

Never hold a child on your lap while in a vehicle. The laws of physics will make it impossible for you to hold onto your child in the event of a crash. In a 60 km/hr crash stopping a baby from moving forward becomes equivalent to trying to stop half a tonne weight (equivalent to a baby elephant!). Tests have shown that your child would be thrown around the vehicle or even ejected through the windscreen if he or she is on your lap.

What can be done?

- ✓ Be a role model: don't speed, drink and drive, or disobey traffic laws and always buckle up.
- ✓ Make sure that children riding in your car are strapped into an appropriate, approved child-restraint.
- ✓ Ensure that all children wear a properly fitted helmet when riding on a bicycle or motorbike.
- ✓ Enrol teenagers in a graduated driver licensing system, i.e. one where driving is restricted in the first two or more years.
- ✓ Ensure that teenage drivers are aware of the perils of disobeying the traffic laws.
- ✓ Encourage all children and teenagers to wear white or bright colours or reflective clothing when walking or cycling near traffic to improve their visibility to others.
- ✓ Teach all children to stop, look and listen before crossing a road, and to think about the safest place to cross.

Which child restraint is best for my child?

The best seat for children is one that fits them. This is determined by their weight or height, not their age. Child safety seats are often described in terms of 'stages', corresponding to certain weight ranges (see below). Some safety seats are convertible or designed to cover more than one stage. Always check the manufacturer's instructions to ensure that a seat is suitable for your child and that it fits properly into your car.

Stage	Type of child restraint	Weight range	Approximate age range
Stage 1	Rearward-facing infant seat (two types)	Babies up to 9 or 13 kg (depending on type of seat)	Birth to 12–15 months
Stage 2	Forward-facing child seat	9–18 kg	9 months to 4 years
Stage 3	Booster seat	15–25 kg	4–6 years
Stage 4	Booster cushion	22–36 kg (up to about 150 cm tall)	6–11 years

Drowning

The facts

- 480 children die from drowning every day.
- Each year 2–3 million children and teenagers get into trouble in the water and come close to drowning.
- Globally children under the age of five are at greatest risk of drowning – infants can drown in only a few centimeters of water.
- Over 98% of child deaths from drowning occur in low-income and middle-income countries.
- In high-income countries most drowning events involving children happen in swimming pools.



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MYTH: My child can swim, he/she won't drown

Swimming is an excellent skill that all children should be taught. However, even skilled swimmers can get into difficulty and drown. In particular, children under the age of 5 years should not be left unattended just because they have had swimming lessons or been taught survival swimming.

What can be done?

- ✓ Cover or remove all water hazards in and around the house: wells, ornamental ponds, and even buckets if there are small children around.
- ✓ Install four-sided fencing around your home swimming-pool, in line with national or local legislation.
- ✓ Make sure that you, or another adult such as a life-guard, watch children at all times when they are swimming or near water.
- ✓ Always make sure both you and your children are wearing flotation devices when you are on a small boat.

What doesn't work?

Baby bath seats and flexible solar pool covers are NOT designed to prevent drowning. Please do not leave your baby unattended in a bath on a seat, or outside around the pool which has a cover on it, thinking that they will be safe. Neither of these two products are a substitute for supervision.

Burns

The facts

- 260 children die from burns every day.
- Burns can be caused by hot objects, hot liquids, fire, chemicals, electricity and the sun.
- The death rate from burns in low-income and middle-income countries is eleven times higher than that in high-income countries.
- Infants are at highest risk of death from burns.
- Fire causes the majority of burn-related deaths, in part because smoke inhalation can also be deadly.
- Nearly 75% of burns in young children are from hot liquid, hot tap water or steam.

MYTH: Butter, sugar or oil make burns heal quicker

Under no circumstances should you use butter, sugar, oil or other traditional remedies on burns. These substances may cause the skin to fall away leaving the tender lower layers more susceptible to infection.



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What can be done?

- ✓ If a child is burnt, immediately administer first aid to stop the burning process.
- ✓ Set the temperature of your hot water cylinder to 50°C in order to prevent scalds.
- ✓ Install a smoke alarm on each floor of your house and test it monthly to make sure that it is working.
- ✓ Keep fireworks, matches and other flammable objects out of the reach of children.
- ✓ Buy only child-resistant lighters.
- ✓ Before buying soft-furnishings and bed clothes, check the label for symbols or information that indicate that they are fire-retardant.

First Aid for Burns	
✗ What not to do	✓ What to do
✗ Do not give first aid before ensuring your own safety (switch off electrical current, wear gloves for chemicals, etc.).	✓ Extinguish flames by encouraging the child to roll on the ground, applying a blanket, or using water or other fire-extinguishing liquids.
✗ Do not apply paste, oil, kumkum (a paste made from turmeric) or raw cotton to the burned area.	✓ Stop the burning process by applying cold water or allowing the burnt area to remain in contact with cold water for some time.
✗ Do not apply ice.	✓ In chemical burns, remove or dilute the chemical by repeatedly washing the wound with water.
✗ Do not apply any material directly to the wound as that may create infection.	✓ Obtain medical care if needed.
✗ Do not open blisters with a needle or pin.	

Falls

The facts

- 130 children die every day from a fall.
- In some countries, half of the injuries to children taken to emergency clinics are from falling.
- 66% of fatal falls are the result of falls from a height.



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What can be done?

- ✓ Use stair gates to prevent small children falling down stairs and keep stairs clear from objects.
- ✓ Install guards on windows that are above the ground-floor.
- ✓ Lobby your local council to improve the standard of equipment in your local playground: appropriate surface material (such as rubber or bark), climbing structures and slides at safe heights, regular safety checks, and maintenance all improve the safety of play areas.

MYTH: All children fall, you can't prevent them

True, falling is a normal part of learning to walk, run and jump and not all falls are severe. However, it is falls from a height, such as from beds, changing tables, down stairs, and off play equipment, that cause the most injuries. These can definitely be prevented.